

# Executive Summary

---

## Introduction

The City of Atlanta's Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP) serves as the City's action plan for managing the City's solid waste. The SWMP is a requirement of the State of Georgia's Department of Community Affairs (DCA) and was initiated by the Georgia Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Act of 1990. The SWMP addresses the City of Atlanta's waste stream, waste reduction, collection, disposal, land limitations, and education and public involvement. This document covers a 10-year planning period from 2005-2014.

The City's previous SWMP was written in 1995 and expires this year. During this period, the City implemented several recommendations from the 1995 plan, including curbside recycling and yard waste collection. The City also closed its four City-owned landfills in 1991, began utilizing Live Oak Landfill in DeKalb County, and is now utilizing privately owned transfer stations and landfills under short-term renewable contracts for the disposal of its waste.

## Overall Approach

Mayor Shirley Franklin and the current Administration's main vision for the City of Atlanta is to become a Best-In-Class city. In keeping with this goal, the City has developed a long-term strategy to effectively manage the City's solid waste. This strategy will reduce waste, educate residents, ensure compliance with applicable requirements, and provide customer satisfaction, while ensuring cost-effective management and operational efficiency.

The key objectives of this long-term strategy are to:

- Inform and educate the public about solid waste services.
- Position the City to provide solid waste services that are Best-In-Class, including providing efficient, cost-effective, and first-rate services and examining alternative disposal options that will be the best technology for the City.
- Provide opportunities for the public to have meaningful input to the solid waste management process and obtain endorsement of the decisions the City plans to implement.
- Comply with State regulations.

## Long-Range Planning

The City understands that future programs and some of the proposed solid waste management programs in this SWMP are for the long-term management of solid waste and

---

not just for the 10-year planning period. The City also understands that solid waste management is an evolving process. Based on the City's assessment and industry trends, the City has identified the following solid waste management components for consideration in the long-range planning for managing solid waste in the City of Atlanta:

- Education and Public Involvement on Source Reduction and Recycling
- Construction and Demolition Debris Recycling
- Eco-Industrial Parks
- City-Owned Transfer Stations
- Waste-to-Energy Solutions
- Landfill Disposal

## Implementation Strategy Overview

The Georgia Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Act set forth the State's waste reduction goal, which requires a 25 percent per capita reduction rate in the amount of solid waste being disposed, from a 1992 baseline year. Since 1992, the City of Atlanta has achieved an 11 percent decrease in the per capita disposal of its solid waste, and has not met the State's waste reduction goal. This per capita disposal includes both the City of Atlanta's and private waste haulers' waste streams for the entire city. In analyzing the amount of solid waste disposed from just the City of Atlanta's municipal collections (not including private waste collections), the per capita disposal reduction from 1992 is 25 percent, which meets the State's reduction goal. Therefore, the 11 percent per capita reduction is most likely impacted by commercial private waste disposal and construction and demolition (C&D) debris. This indicates a need for the City to evaluate current commercial recycling programs and research the potential for C&D debris recycling programs and facilities. Other waste reduction, collection, disposal, and education and public involvement programs will help the City meet or exceed the 25 percent reduction goal for the planning period.

The City has identified over 70 existing and new programs to help the City reduce waste, improve collection, research disposal options, ensure that land limitations on solid waste handling facilities are met, and increase education and public awareness of solid waste management.

It is understood that waste management is everyone's responsibility, from the City to its residents. Because all citizens want a clean place in which to live, everyone in the City of Atlanta must bear an equal share in managing its solid waste. It is a cooperative process, in which the City must provide the best services its residents desire through cost-effective and operationally efficient means, and the residents must do their part in following curbside set-out rules and not illegally dumping solid waste. This cooperation is enhanced when opportunities for waste reduction, education, and public involvement are available during the entire process. A holistic approach to managing the City's solid waste will ensure that Atlanta is a Best-In-Class city for many years to come.